

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 00468 131855Z

73

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
----- 077533

R 131617Z JAN 76
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8651
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 468

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PINT, UR
SUBJECT: HARASSMENT OF THE "SUNDAY SEMINAR" GROUP OF JEWISH
DISSIDENTS

REF: 75 MOSCOW 18409

1. SUMMARY: KGB HARASSMENT OF "SUNDAY SEMINAR" GROUP OF
JEWISH DISSIDENTS IS INCREASING. APPARENT AIM IS TO CAUSE
IT TO CEASE ITS ACTIVITIES. SEMINAR ORGANIZERS ARE QUITE
CONCERNED, BUT DETERMINED TO CARRY ON. END SUMMARY.

2. MARK AZBEL AND VIKTOR BRAYLOVSKIY, TWO OF THE
ORGANIZERS OF THE "SUNDAY SEMINAR" GROUP OF JEWISH DISSIDENTS,
TOLD US JANUARY 13 ABOUT A RECENT INCREASE IN POLICE HARASSMENT.
IN THE LAST THREE WEEKS THERE HAVE BEEN SEVEN INTERROGATIONS
OF MEMBERS OF THE "SUNDAY SEMINAR" GROUP. THERE HAVE ALSO
BEEN FOUR SEARCHES OF DISSIDENTS' APARTMENTS. ALTHOUGH THE
OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE FOR THE INTERROGATIONS WAS AN INVESTIGATION
INTO THE PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF THE CLANDESTINE
JOURNAL "YEVREI V SSSR", THE KGB INTERROGATORS INTIMATED
THAT THEY WERE ATTEMPTING TO PUT AN END TO THE MEETINGS
OF THE "SUNDAY SEMINAR". THEY REPORTEDLY SAID THAT
WHAT GOES ON IN THE "SUNDAY SEMINAR" IS (A) NO BETTER
THAN ESPIONAGE, (B) IS ANTI-SOVIET, AND (C) IS IN ANY
CASE CERTAINLY ILLEGAL.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MOSCOW 00468 131855Z

3. THE CURRENT APARTMENT SEARCHES, OUR SOURCES SAY, IN-

VOLVE AN INNOVATION IN SOVIET LEGAL PRACTICE. IN ONE CASE A DISSIDENT WHO LIVES ALONE WAS TOLD DURING HIS INTERROGATION AT A POLICE STATION THAT AT THAT MOMENT HIS APARTMENT WAS BEING SEARCHED. HE PROTESTED THIS BREACH OF SOVIET LEGALITY AND WAS TOLD IT WAS ONLY AN "UNOFFICIAL SEARCH." THE AUTHORITIES REPORTEDLY ADMITTED THAT THEY DID NOT KNOW EXACTLY WHAT THEY MIGHT FIND, AND SINCE THEY COULD NOT LEGALLY SEARCH AN APRTMENT WITHOUT A SPECIFIC OBJECT THEY WERE TAKING THIS OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK FOR POSSIBLY INCRIMINATING MATERIAL WHICH THEY COULD THEN USE AS A PRETEXT FOR A LEGAL SEARCH. OUR SOURCES REPORT THAT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME, AS FAR AS THEY KNOW, THAT THE KGB HAS ADMITTED TO USING THIS PRACTICE.

4. THE "SUNDAY SEMINAR" SESSION OF JANUARY 4 WAS MARKED BY THE SUDDEN ARRIVAL OF TWO SOVIET OFFICIALS, ONE IN UNIFORM AND ONE NOT. THEY CAME TO SAY THAT THE NEIGHBORS HAD COMPLAINED AT THE NOISE OF THE SEMINAR'S DISCUSSIONS. THEY LEFT, THREATENING UNSPECIFIED ACTIONS WHEN IT WAS POINTED OUT TO THEM THAT NO SOVIET REGULATION PROHIBITS THE NOISE OF CONVERSATION DURING THE DAY.

5. OUR SOURCES FEEL THAT THE AUTHORITIES ARE SERIOUS IN THEIR ATTEMPTS TO CHOK OFF THE SUNDAY SEMINAR. THEY HAVE BECOME IRRITATED AT A RECENT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS (SOMETIMES UP TO 65) AND THE FACT THAT FOREIGN VISITORS OFTEN ADDRESS THE SEMINAR. THE ULTIMATE INSULT, OUR SOURCES FEEL, MAY HAVE BEEN THE PRESENTATION ON JEWISH MEDICAL ETHICS WHICH BRITISH CHIEF RABBI JACOBOWITZ MADE DURING HIS RECENT TRIP HERE (REFTEL). JACOBOWITZ HAD MADE CLEAR TO HIS SOVIET HOSTS THAT HE INTENDED TO ADDRESS THE SEMINAR AND HAD EVEN USED HIS OFFICIALLY PROVIDED CHAIKA TO BE TAKEN TO THE SEMINAR.

6. AZBEL AND BRAYLOVSKIY ADMIT TO BEING QUITE WORRIED AT THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH THE AUTHORITIES SEEM TO BE TAKING THE CURRENT ACTIVITIES OF THE "SUNDAY SEMINAR." THEY CLAIM NEVERTHELESS THAT THEY PLAN TO CONTINUE ITS MEETINGS AND WILL PROBABLY TRY TO GET SOME STORIES ABOUT THE NEW HARASSMENT INTO THE WESTERN PRESS.
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MOSCOW 00468 131855Z

MATLOCK

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HARASSMENT, JEWS, DISSIDENT FACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MOSCOW00468
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X4
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760012-1101
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760163/aaaacdju.tel
Line Count: 108
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 75 MOSCOW 18409
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <01 SEP 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HARASSMENT OF THE "SUNDAY SEMINAR" GROUP OF JEWISH DISSIDENTS
TAGS: PINT, UR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006